

CBI investigation into purchase of railway cranes

†3926. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the railways had caused CBI investigation into purchase of cranes, on the basis of the report of the CAG of India;
- (b) if so, the conclusions thereof;
- (c) the points highlighted by the CAG of India in his report; and
- (d) whether these suggestions have been fully implemented; if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) In view of specific observations of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India in their report No. 9 of 1999 (Railways), on the procurement of cranes, it had been decided to entrust the details investigation to central Bureau of Investigation in March' 2000.

(b) The matter is being investigated by CBI.

(c) As per the CAG report No. 9 of 1999 tabled in the Parliament, the CAG has contended that the import of 140T crane was resorted to by Railways without exploring indigenous sources, transfer of technology alongwith supply contract were not in any way adding to the capabilities of Indian Railways to manufacture cranes, rejection of cheaper offer resulted in higher expenditure and delay in absorption of technology imported in 1988 led the Railways to keep away from the recent crane technology, etc.

(d) All the issues raised by CAG in their report have been replied as per the laid down procedure. No specific suggestions were indicated in the report.

Losses to Konkan Railways

3927. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

[20 April, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

(a) whether it is a fact that Konkan Railway suffered a loss of Rs. 879 crore during the last three years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what concrete/corrective steps have been taken or are proposed to be taken by Government for development of Konkan Railway?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Corporation is able to meet its working expenses from the revenues generated. The loss suffered is due to the financing cost incurred in market borrowing and depreciation. All efforts are being made to improve the viability of Konkan Railway. Besides ensuring adequate financial assistance, introduction of a new service called Ro-Ro (Roll on-Roll off) for moving road traffic on rail and the offering of station to station rates, wherever possible, in order to attract traffic, are steps taken in this direction. Aggressive marketing efforts have been launched to contact local industries, on the Konkan Railway route, in order to attract more traffic to the system. In addition, the Konkan Railway has also been permitted to utilise their construction expertise for taking up infrastructure projects within the country to mop up further resources.

Haridaspur-Paradip and Roopsa-Baripada Rail Lines

3928. MISS FRIDA TOPNO: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total estimated cost of the new Haridaspur-Paradip rail line;

(b) the total estimated cost of the Roopsa-Baripada rail line;

(c) the progress of the work in these above cases; and

(d) by when they are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH):

(a) Rs. 301.64 crore.

(b) Rupsa—Baripada (51 kms.) is a part of Rupsa—Bangriposi